

VZCZCXRO0541
PP RUEHMA RUEHPA
DE RUEHCO #0547 3211330
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 171330Z NOV 09
FM AMEMBASSY COTONOU
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1184
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 1547
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0489

UNCLAS COTONOU 000547

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/W ASHLEY STEWART
LONDON AND PARIS FOR AFRICA WATCHERS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KCOR](#) [BN](#)
SUBJECT: BENIN: GOB VERIFIES CIVIL SERVANTS' DIPLOMAS

¶1. (U) On November 3, the Minister of Labor and Civil Service, Charles Kint Aguiar, submitted to the Council of Ministers the latest findings as reported by the National Committee for the verification of Civil Servants and Military personnel's diplomas. The Committee handled a total of 646 cases of fake diplomas during ¶2008. The report mentioned that of these 646 cases the committee "detected a few cases where civil servants were allegedly involved in the use of fake diplomas" without indicating the exact number.

¶2. (U) Approving the Committee's report, the Council of Ministers instructed both the Minister of Labor and Civil Service and the Minister of Economy and Finance to apply adequate sanctions to the concerned holders of fake diplomas or degrees.

¶3. (U) The National Committee for the verification of Civil Servants and Military personnel's diplomas was created in 1996 as part of the implementation of a February 1990 National Conference recommendation to improve ethics in the public service by purging it of fake diploma holders who wrongfully obtained jobs.

¶4. (U) Since 1996 the committee has periodically checked degrees and diplomas of military and civil service employees. The government has fired the guilty discovered in these checks. The Committee, however, does not engage in systematic verification of civil servant diplomas during the recruitment process. Fraud is usually discovered, after the new recruits have been in office for several years.

¶5. (U) The use of fake degrees by individuals to enter the public service was widespread in former President Mathieu Kerekou's Marxist administration (1972-1989), when the recruitment process was extremely lax. There are no available statistics to show the scope of that practice among civil servants nor studies to gage its negative impact on the government's salary-related expenses.

KNIGHT